



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
6013 Lakeside Blvd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46278

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February 15, 2006

INDIANA BULLETIN NO. 300-6-12

SUBJECT: LTP – Conservation Security Program Fiscal Year 2006 Guidance to Employees  
Involved the Fiscal Year 2006 Sign-Up

Purpose: To distribute guidance to NRCS Indiana employees who will be involved in the fiscal year 2006 CSP Sign-Up

Expiration Date: September 30, 2006

Conservation Security Program (CSP) Sign-Up is from February 13, 2006 through March 31, 2006 in the Wildcat and Upper Miami Watersheds in Indiana. Numerous changes have been made between the fiscal year 2005 CSP Sign-Up and the fiscal year 2006 Sign-Up. Please follow the guidance in this bulletin to ensure that all applicants are evaluated consistently, and to ensure there is sufficient staff time to complete all of the necessary steps during the Sign-Up.

Since Ohio is the lead for the Upper Miami Watershed, Ohio instructions supersede this bulletin.

### **APPLICANT SELF-CERTIFICATION**

Applicants for Fiscal Year 2006 CSP will supply sufficient documentation to NRCS to prove eligibility and Tier placement. Indiana will use a '6-Part Folder' system that provides each applicant with the necessary items they must complete prior to NRCS evaluating their CSP offer.

CSP applicants are required to complete all applicable items in the 6-Part Folders as a self-certification process.

The 6-Part Folder completed by the applicant plus any additional NRCS documentation will become the official NRCS CSP case file in the Field Office.

Applicants will also complete and sign the attached '*CSP Applicant Offer Certification Worksheet*' during the interview process.

### **APPLICANT REGISTER & INTERVIEWS**

**All applicants who apply for CSP and complete their 6-Part Folder prior to March 31, 2006 will be offered an interview to the best of NRCS's ability.** Applicants who sign up for CSP toward the end of the sign-up period will be offered an interview within NRCS's schedule rather than a mutually-agreed upon date to ensure the established deadlines are met.

An Applicant Register will be used in each Field Office to record the number of interested applicants. At the time an applicant applies for CSP and is entered on the register, NRCS will do the following:

1. Schedule an interview
2. Ensure the applicant completes all items in the 6-Part Folder prior to their scheduled interview.
3. Inform each applicant to bring their supporting documentation to the interview.
4. Enter the applicant into ProTracts and check the eligibility of the applicant.
  - a. If ProTracts shows the applicant as currently ineligible, the applicant has 30 days to correct the ineligibility.

Because of limited staff time, **do not allow applicants who have not completed their 6-Part Folder requirements to proceed with their scheduled interview. However, schedule another interview and ensure the applicant understands they must complete all applicable items in the 6-Part Folder prior to that date. Field Offices must document each of these in Assistance Notes, with information about the re-scheduled subsequent interview.**

**Also, unless there is sufficient reason to doubt the applicant's self-verification of eligibility and Tier placement, there is no requirement for NRCS to review or analyze the applicant's supporting documentation.** However, all supporting documentation must be made available to NRCS immediately upon request.

### **APPLICANT EVALUATION AND TIER PLACEMENT**

All evaluations for CSP eligibility and Tier placement will be made based on the information the applicant provides in the 6-Part Folder and supporting documentation.

See Indiana Bulletin No. 300-6-11 for additional guidance about Categories and Sub-Categories.

### **ENHANCEMENTS**

All enhancement activities currently being implemented will be considered as 'benchmark' enhancements and will be marked in ProTracts accordingly. Benchmark activities currently receiving payments from other Farm Bill Program contracts will be scheduled in the first year following the year the other Farm Bill Program payments cease in the CSP contract.

Enhancements currently not implemented on the agricultural operation, as defined by the applicant, are eligible for scheduling in future years. To be eligible for payment, the enhancement activity must be implemented prior to the payment being made.

**New enhancements will not be scheduled until at least Fiscal Year 2007.**

**Ensure that applicants are aware that any scheduled enhancement activity must be implemented in the year scheduled, or the contract will be considered in violation.**

## **TIER II ADDITIONAL RESOURCE CONCERN**

In fiscal year 2006, the additional resource concern for Tier II applications is ensuring buffers of at least 20 feet wide are adjacent to each side under control of the applicant of every stream, ditch, and/or river on the agricultural operation. These buffers may be grass or trees, and must be installed within at least 3 years of contract approval.

## **FIELD OFFICE CHECKLIST**

The attached '*CSP FY06 Field Office Checklist*' will be completed as applicable for each CSP applicant, and filed in the official CSP 6-Part Folder prior to the applicant leaving the interview.

## **TOOLKIT & PROTRACTS**

The use of Toolkit 2004 is **required** to create the CSP stewardship plan. All benchmark enhancement activities, new enhancement activities, and new practices will be scheduled for **all years of the contract through Toolkit**.

The Stewardship Payment and the Existing Practice Payment **will not** be scheduled through Toolkit. ProTracts will automatically calculate and add these items into the CSP contract.

All Toolkit-generated CSP plans will be uploaded into ProTracts and all other ProTracts requirements completed.

The AD-1155 is the required CSP Conservation Plan, and it must be signed. **Only print the AD-1155 from ProTracts, not Toolkit, so that the necessary payment reduction calculations are completed.**

See the attached '*Toolkit and ProTracts for CSP 2006*' document for additional information.

Direct all questions related to this bulletin to Joe Williams at (317) 290-3200, ext. 311, or to Shannon Zezula, Acting Assistant State Conservationist - Programs, at (317) 290-3200, ext. 388.

/s/

J. XAVIER MONTOYA  
Acting State Conservationist

Attachments

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